years of the Tang, Buddhism in China reached its acme and joined with other forces in stimulating a new outburst of the Chinese spirit—this time in an expression of the emotions in art and poetry. Buddhism also continued to stir the Chinese mind to grapple with problems of philosophy.

THE SUI DYNASTY

As the Ch'in preceded the Han but had, as compared with the latter, only a brief life, so the Sui enjoyed only a short tenure of power. The Sui, however, although responsible for many important developments, did not make so notable a contribution to the permanent heritage of the nation as had the Chin.

Yang Chien, the founder of the Sui, and known to posterity under the title of Kao Tsu or Wen Ti, appears to have been a better ruler than the average, lightening the taxes, codifying the laws, and setting an example of simple living—for a monarch. Under him the administration of the Empire was reorganized, modifications being made in the territorial divisions over which members of the bureaucracy were placed. He developed a succession of canals to connect the Yellow River with the Yangtze—advantageous in unifying the North and the South. Whether these were begun *de novo* or were a renovation and enlargement of a series which can be traced to Chou times is not clear. During his reign the Chinese reconquered what is now Tongking and part of Annam, which, on the southern edge of the Empire, had been in revolt since at least 590—in the years when Yang Chien was attempting to consolidate his rule. The Japanese, hearing of his fame, sent an embassy to him. Under Yang Chien, too, the Chinese once more took a hand in the politics of Central Asia.

In the second half of the sixth century, the T'u Chiieh, or Turks, it will be recalled, had established a federation extending over a vast area in Mongolia and Central Asia. Like so many of these ephemeral empires, theirs soon broke apart, the Eastern (also called the Northern) Turks separating from those of the West ^582). The Chinese sought to deepen the divisions among the Turks, as a preliminary to increasing their influence there and possibly also as a means of defense.

Yang Chien died suddenly in 604, perhaps assassinated by the orders of his son, the heir apparent, who succeeded him. This son